

## **2960, Shakamak**

### **PROJECT ABSTRACT**

Shakamak is fostering the potential of technology as a curriculum transforming agent by fashioning Project EXTRA2 (Embedding Xciting Technology to Raise Academic Achievement), a proposed program to create a new, empowered learning environment. At the local level, Project EXTRA2 gets right to the core of providing modern, integrated technologies and online resources for the students. Infusion and implementation of technology into all types of classrooms as a key catalyst to educational restructuring will offer all students a rich, educational experience leading to college, post-secondary technical training, or meaningful work. Project EXTRA2 is designed to accelerate the present pace of educational improvement for students, increase the number and quality of learning opportunities.

This project will impact all students in grades 7-8, teachers and countless families as it tackles some of the most difficult issues facing rural schools--the need to improve student achievement with extremely limited resources, time, and talents. The activities contained within this learning technologies grant proposal are designed to address student learning and to impact directly the teaching and learning environment at Metropolitan School District of Shakamak. Through this proposal, Shakamak Schools seek to address its student learning needs regarding literacy and higher level literacy skills. These subject area skills and content are based on the Indiana Academic Standards. Through the grant, we seek to meet the learning needs of Shakamak students by training teachers to utilize only the best practices enhanced with technology and by providing technology rich classrooms to support these teaching and learning activities. Junior high classrooms will be equipped with a variety of technology that offers great flexibility in its use for both students and teachers to realize the project objectives.

The primary activities to meet the objectives will occur through a staff development process that facilitates the use of best practices to produce opportunities for students to use technology to improve their literacy and thinking skills. The staff development process will also focus on the creation of a research-based, positive learning environment that is active, collaborative, complex, challenging, and authentic. Professional development will provide professional learning communities and personalized instruction on embedding technology into the classroom offered by a technology coach. To maximize the impact of the grant, professional development will be available to all Shakamak teachers.

Needs were identified using teacher surveys, ISTEP+ scores, NWEA scores, graduation statistics, teacher meetings, and administrative meetings to identify the two primary focus areas which are the development of high-level literacy skills enhanced by reading comprehension strategies and extensive interdisciplinary projects targeting cultural awareness.